

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DOE-15 SOE-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12
NRC-05 OES-07 /129 W
-----028741 051922Z /72
R 051529Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2532

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PASS DEPT OF ENERGY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY BERGOLD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, ENRG, IT
SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT TO U.S. BY MINISTER DONAT-CATTIN

REF: 77 ROME 17695 AND PREVIOUS

1. DEPARTMENT WILL REMEMBER THAT CARLO DONAT-CATTIN, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND HANDICRAFTS AND LEADER OF IMPORTANT FORZE NUOVE FACTION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DC), HAD EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN VISITING U.S. LAST FALL, PRIMARILY TO MEET WITH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER, AND THAT FOR VARIETY OF REASONS THIS VIST WAS POSTPONED INDEFINITELY.

2. EMBASSY RECEIVED VISIT LAST WEEK FROM TWO OF DONAT-CATTIN COLLABORATORS, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTER, ABOUT POSSIBLE VISIT BY DONAT-CATTIN TO THE U.S. IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THESE COLLABORATORS MADE IT CLEAR THAT DONAT-CATTIN IS ANXIOUS TO VISIT THE U.S., NOT ONLY TO DISCUSS BILATERAL ENERGY COOPERATION AND RELATED ENERGY ISSUES WITH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AND OTHERS, BUT, EQUALLY IMPORTANT, FOR POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS. AS EXPLAINED BY THEM, DONAT-CATTIN CONSIDERS IT VERY IMPORTANT THAT HE, AS ONE
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OF THE KEY DC FIGURES AND A LEADER OF THE DC'S STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST ELEMENT, EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH WASHINGTON POLICY-MAKERS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN ITALY AND ON U.S. POLICY TOWARD ITALY. THEY ATTACHED ADDED IMPORTANCE TO DONAT-CATTIN'S STATURE WITHIN THE DC AS A RESULT OF THE MORO KIDNAPPING AND EMPHASIZED NEED FOR AN EARLY VISIT.

3. ACCORDING TO THEM, DONAT-CATTIN WOULD LIKE TO COME DURING SECOND HALF OF JUNE. HE WOULD ENVISAGE A VISIT CONSISTING OF (A) POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS WITH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS, INCLUDING, IF POSSIBLE, THE VICE PRESIDENT; (B) MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AND OTHER OFFICIALS ON ENERGY; (C) MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND HOUSE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE; AND (D) TRAVEL TO SOME CITIES OTHER THAN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK IN ORDER TO GAIN FIRST HAND PERSPECTIVES ON U.S. INDUSTRY. DONAT-CATTIN INTERMEDIARIES EMPHASIZED THE MINISTER'S TRIP SHOULD CONSIST OF MORE THAN COURTESY CALLS AND THAT IT PRODUCE "CONCRETE RESULTS". WHEN WE INTERPRETED LATTER AS APPLYING TO BILATERAL ENERGY COOPERATION, THEY INDICATED THAT THEY HAD POLITICAL SIDE EQUALLY IN MIND.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT U.S. INTERESTS WOULD BE DEFINITELY FURTHERED BY EARLY VISIT TO U.S. BY DONAT-CATTIN. ALTHOUGH DONAT-CATTIN HAS HAD AN ANTI-U.S. BIAS, IS IRASCIBLE AND UNPREDICTABLE, HE REMAINS NONETHELESS ONE OF A HANDFUL OF KEY LEADERS WITHIN THE DC AND, INDEED, ASSUMES INCREASED IMPORTANCE WITH THE TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT REMOVAL OF MORO FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE. HE CONTROLS AN INFLUENTIAL FACTION WITHIN THE DC PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION AND HAS BEEN ONE OF THE STRONGEST VOICES AGAINST DC ACCOMMODATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS. FINALLY, DONAT-CATTIN HAS NEVER VISITED THE U.S. AND THEREFORE COULD BENEFIT FROM EXPOSURE IN WASHINGTON AND ELSEWHERE.

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5. WITH RESPECT TO ENERGY ASPECT OF THE TRIP, WE UNDERSTAND THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AGREED TO RECEIVE DONAT-CATTIN IN THE U.S. WHEN THEY MET AT THE OCTOBER IEA MINISTERIAL MEETING; IN ANY CASE, DONAT-CATTIN APPARENTLY BELIEVES THAT HE HAS AN OUTSTANDING INVITATION FROM SECRETARY SCHLESINGER. WE BELIEVE THAT EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON ENERGY MATTERS COULD BE MOST USEFUL, IN PARTICULAR IN REINFORCING IDEA OF ADVANTAGES TO ITALY OF COOPERATION WITH OIL CONSUMING COUNTRIES, MAINTAINING A COOPERATIVE STANCE IN INFCE AND IN MOVING AHEAD WITH WORK ON BILATERAL ENERGY COOPERATION. IN TERMS OF TIMING, HOWEVER, SUGGESTED LATE JUNE VISIT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY OVERLAP TO SOME EXTENT WITH VISIT TO ITALY BY ENERGY DEPUTY SECRETARY O'LEARY (WHICH WILL BE SUBJECT SEPTTEL). WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THAT IS MANAGEABLE PROBLEM.

6. ON THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE TRIP, WE THINK IT WOULD USEFUL TO GIVE DONAT-CATTIN A BROAD EXPOSURE TO AMERICAN ATTITUDES. WE THINK HIS SCHEDULE SHOULD INCLUDE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS--THE VICE-PRESIDENT, IF POSSIBLE, AND SENIOR STATE AND NSC OFFICIALS--AS WELL AS CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA. WE WILL MAKE MORE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS WHEN THE TRIP IS FIRMLY SCHEDULED AND WE KNOW THE

TIME AVAILABLE. GARDNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PLANNING MEETINGS, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME08235
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780192-0949
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780588/aaaacxkw.tel
Line Count: 117
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d0753aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 77 ROME 17695
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2777201
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED VISIT TO U.S. BY MINISTER DONAT-CATTIN
TAGS: PINT, ENRG, IT, (DONAT-COTTIN, CARLO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d0753aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014